Teen And Up Audiences

Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

M/M

ULTRAKILL (Video Game)

Gabriel/V1 (ULTRAKILL)

Gabriel (ULTRAKILL)
V1 (ULTRAKILL)
Council of Heaven (ULTRAKILL)

Alternate Universe - Arranged Marriage
Fake/Pretend Relationship
Except It's Not Fake They're Actually In Love
Secret Relationship
Toxic Vows That Are Actually Love Confessions
The Council (ULTRAKILL) Being Assholes
V1 is a Little Shit
Gabriel Is So In Love It's Embarrassing
Sign Language
V1 Uses Sign Language (ULTRAKILL)
Violence as a Love Language
They're finally Married Your Honor
Fluff and Crack
English

Till Death Do Us Part | Gabv1el Oneshot

Strawberrymilk932

Summary:

The Council has a brilliant plan: Gabriel will marry the machine that defeated him twice. Bind V1 through holy matrimony, make it Heaven's obedient weapon, and obedient to their Supreme Angel. It's strategic, it's political, and it's absolutely foolproof.

There's just one small problem.

Gabriel proposed the plan himself. And V1 accepted immediately. . . how odd

Heaven breathed in preparation for something it had never witnessed before.

The cathedral rose in tiers of white stone and gold leaf, impossibly tall, its spires piercing clouds that had never known rain. Stained glass windows depicted scenes of divine justice, light filtering through them in shades of blue and gold that painted the marble floors in holy radiance. Every surface gleamed. Every corner had been scrubbed clean. Angels moved through the space with reverent efficiency, hanging garlands of white flowers that grew only in Paradise, arranging seats in perfect rows, placing candles that would never gutter or die.

The air hummed with whispered conversation, angels clustered in small groups, their wings folded tight against their backs as they spoke in tones meant not to carry. Blues and whites and golds, translucent wings catching the light, halos floating like crowns above heads that bent together in conspiratorial discussion.

"Can you believe it?" one whispered, adjusting a banner of white silk. "An angel, marrying that thing."

"The Supreme Angel," another corrected, voice tight with something between awe and horror. "Gabriel himself. Willingly binding himself to a machine."

"It's a sacrifice," a third said, and her tone carried the weight of mourning. "He's giving up everything for Heaven's safety. For us."

Near the altar, where light seemed to concentrate until it was almost blinding, the Council members stood in their own tight circle. Robed figures, ancient and terrible, their faces hidden behind masks that bore no expression. They spoke in voices that carried the weight of eons, discussing logistics and outcomes with the clinical detachment of generals planning a siege.

"The chains are prepared?" one asked, voice echoing strangely in the vast space.

"Angelic iron, blessed and unbreakable," another confirmed. "Once bound, the machine will be Gabriel's to command. Our weapon. Our executioner."

"And Gabriel understands the terms? The permanence of the bond?"

A pause. Then, "He proposed it himself. He knows what he's giving up."

What the angels believed, what they whispered about in the corners of the cathedral while hanging decorations meant for weddings born of love, was this: the marriage was a strategic alliance. Nothing more. A binding contract between Heaven and a creature of war, formalized through the symbology of human kingdoms where high-status figures wed to create unbreakable political ties.

Two entities, bound by rings and vows, forced to work as one.

Gabriel had been the one to suggest it. Had stood before the Council with his wings blazing blue and his voice steady, explaining his plan with the precision of a military strategist. The machine called V1 had ravaged thousands. Had descended through Hell's layers like divine wrath inverted, killing everything that stood before it. Had beaten the Prime Souls themselves, those impossible beings of pure will and fury. Minos Prime. Sisyphus Prime. Both had fallen to V1's relentless assault.

Heaven should fear this machine, Gabriel had said. But fear could be turned to advantage.

"Marry me to it," Gabriel had told the Council, and his voice had not wavered. "Bind us together. When the machine is tied to me through holy matrimony, through chains that cannot break and vows that cannot be undone, it will be mine to control. Mine to command." His wings had flared brighter. "I will make it speak my words. Follow my orders. It will become Heaven's right hand, our executioner, our weapon against Hell itself."

The Council had deliberated. The idea was insane, they said. Unprecedented. An angel, marrying a machine? Binding himself eternally to something built for slaughter?

But Gabriel knew them. Knew their greed, their hunger for power, their desperate need to control what they could not destroy. The Council's avarice was no better than a man's, and the thought of possessing V1, of turning Heaven's greatest threat into their greatest asset, was too tempting to refuse.

They had agreed within the hour.

No one questioned how easily V1 had been captured. No one wondered why the machine, which had slaughtered its way through legions of angels during its descent, had submitted so readily to imprisonment. No one found it odd that when Gabriel appeared at its cell with chains of blessed light, V1 had extended its arms willingly, letting the bindings wrap around its wrists without a single attempt at resistance.

The Council saw what they wanted to see: victory. Control. Divine authority reasserted over chaos.

They didn't see the way Gabriel's hands had trembled, just slightly, when he locked those chains into place.

In the preparation chamber adjacent to the cathedral's main hall, Gabriel stood before a full-length mirror while attendant angels fussed over the final details of his attire.

The dress was a work of art.

White fabric that seemed woven from light itself, flowing in ways that defied physics, catching every movement with liquid grace. Gold thread had been embroidered along the hem and sleeves in patterns that mimicked his wings, delicate and intricate. The bodice was fitted, designed to emphasize the powerful lines of his form while the skirt flowed out in layers of silk and gossamer. A veil rested on a nearby table, waiting to be placed, sheer white material that would partially obscure his helmet's golden cross.

Angels worked around him with gentle hands, adjusting seams, smoothing fabric, adding final touches to what should have been a celebration of love and instead felt like preparation for execution.

"You're very brave, Lord Gabriel," one angel whispered, adjusting the drape of his veil. Her wings trembled with emotion. "Sacrificing yourself like this. To something so cruel. So incapable of—"

"It's nothing," Gabriel interrupted, his voice carrying that practiced tone of noble dismissal. The tone he used when he wanted people to believe he was unaffected. "A tactical decision. Nothing more." His wings shifted, blue light playing across the white walls. "The machine will serve Heaven. That's what matters."

The angel nodded, but her eyes held pity. Sadness for the Supreme Angel who was giving himself to something heartless. Something that could never love him back.

If only she knew.

Gabriel's reflection stared back at him from the mirror, and beneath the helmet his expression was carefully neutral. Playing the part. The martyr. The sacrifice. The angel willing to bind himself to a monster for the greater good.

But his thoughts, private and guarded, were elsewhere entirely.

He thought of V1's movements in combat, how they resembled dance more than warfare. Precise. Beautiful. Deadly. He thought of the way the machine tilted its head when processing information, that camera-lens turning to focus with an intensity that felt almost intimate. He thought of small moments, glimpses of something that the Council would call impossible but Gabriel knew to be true.

The machine was capable of love. Gabriel had seen it in the way V1 fought, not with mindless aggression but with passion. Had seen it in small gestures, the way V1 responded to challenges with what could only be called excitement. The heart that existed in those small adjustments of the yellow lens that served as pupils. The charm hidden beneath all that violence.

His man, Gabriel thought, and the possessiveness of it made something warm bloom in his chest. Soon V1 would be in a suit that matched this dress. Soon they would stand before witnesses and speak vows that would mean everything to Gabriel and appear to mean nothing to everyone else.

The angels finished their work and stepped back, bowing respectfully before filing out of the chamber. They left Gabriel alone with his reflection, with the weight of what was about to happen settling across his shoulders like armor.

Gabriel turned to face the full-length mirror properly, seeing himself in the dress for the first time without the distraction of attendants.

And felt, suddenly and unexpectedly, embarrassed.

His body was clearly masculine. Too masculine for something like this, perhaps. The dress had been tailored perfectly, accommodated his frame with expert precision, but Gabriel couldn't help but notice the breadth of his shoulders, the strong lines of his build, the way the fabric clung to muscles built for warfare rather than—

A sound cut through his self-consciousness.

A whirr. Mechanical. Familiar. The quiet hum of a cooling fan cycling through its rhythm, pitched in a way that sounded distinctly like a whistle. Appreciative. Teasing.

Gabriel's wings flared, translucent blue blazing brighter, and he spun toward the source.

V1 leaned against the open window frame, casual as anything, yellow optic bright and focused entirely on Gabriel.

The machine was wearing a suit.

Black fabric, tailored perfectly to V1's frame, emphasizing the sleek lines of its chassis. White shirt visible beneath the jacket. A tie, somehow, despite V1 having no neck to speak of, the fabric arranged in a way that worked with the machine's unique anatomy. The suit matched Gabriel's dress in style and formality, black to Gabriel's white, creating a visual complement that made Gabriel's cooling system work harder.

V1 looked good. Devastatingly good. And the machine knew it if that tilted head and bright optic were any indication.

"How," Gabriel started, voice modulator struggling with the sudden spike of emotion, "did you escape your cell?"

V1 pushed off from the window frame, movement fluid and precise, and its hands came up in that familiar gesture. Signing. Each motion deliberate.

"Not. Too. Difficult." The machine's head tilted in what might have been a shrug. "Angels. Are. Predictable."

Gabriel should have been alarmed. Should have been concerned about security breaches and containment failures. Should have immediately alerted the guards.

Instead, he found himself fighting the urge to laugh.

"And the bloodshed?" Gabriel asked, wings settling into a calmer blue. "Please tell me you didn't kill half the guard on your way here."

V1's optic brightened, and its hands moved again.

"No. Bloodshed. Today." A pause, then the machine's signs took on a distinctly playful edge. "Unless. Under. Gabriel's. Command. As. Planned."

The emphasis on those last words, the way V1 signed them with obvious mockery of Gabriel's proposal to the Council, finally broke Gabriel's composure. He laughed, the sound echoing in the preparation chamber, genuine and unguarded.

V1 moved closer, crossing the space between window and mirror with that predatory grace that never failed to make Gabriel's processors skip. The machine stopped just in front of Gabriel, yellow optic tracking up and down, taking in the full effect of the dress with obvious appreciation.

Then V1 reached out and took Gabriel's hand, the gesture surprisingly gentle for something built to kill. Those metallic fingers, designed to crush and tear, held Gabriel's gauntleted hand with a care that made something in Gabriel's chest tighten.

V1 brought Gabriel's hand up to its camera-head, pressing the knuckles against the smooth surface of its lens. A mockery of a kiss, the gesture theatrical and intimate all at once.

Then its hands released Gabriel's, moving to sign:

"You. Look. Beautiful."

Gabriel's face flushed, at least what it would've been if the helmet could show it. He looked away, wings flickering between blue and something warmer, and tried to remember how to form words.

"It's bad luck," Gabriel finally managed, voice slightly unsteady, "for the groom to see the bride's dress before the ceremony." He gestured between them, encompassing both their outfits. "You've ruined our wedding before it even started."

V1's optic dimmed in what Gabriel had learned to recognize as amusement, and its hands moved with obvious mirth.

"Already. In. Bad. Luck. Streak." A pause, letting that settle, then: "Marrying. Me. As. Angels. Say."

The self-deprecation in that statement, the acknowledgment of what others thought of it, made Gabriel's wings flare brighter. He stepped closer, closing the distance V1 had maintained, until he could see his reflection in that yellow lens.

"I wouldn't have it any other way," Gabriel said softly, and meant every word.

V1 looked up at Gabriel, yellow optic bright and unwavering, and the machine went perfectly still.

The way someone does when they're trying to memorize a moment. When they're trying to burn an image into permanent storage because they know they'll want to revisit it again and again. V1's camera-lens tracked across Gabriel's face, his wings, the dress that made him look like something out of a dream, and the machine's chassis hummed with something that sounded almost like contentment.

This angel was going to be his soon. His. The concept made V1's processors work overtime, trying to calculate the probability of this being real, trying to understand how a machine built for war had ended up here, in a preparation chamber in Heaven, staring at the most beautiful thing it had ever seen.

But then something shifted in V1's posture. The machine's optic dimmed, and its head turned away, that camera-lens focusing on the floor instead of Gabriel's face.

Embarrassment. Unmistakable even without facial features to convey it.

"V1?" Gabriel's voice carried immediate concern, wings shifting forward slightly like he wanted to reach out. "What's wrong?"

The machine hesitated, hands half-raised to sign before dropping back to its sides. Then, slowly, V1's hands came up again.

"I. Want. This." Each word signed with deliberate care. "More. Than. Anything."

Gabriel waited, watching, and V1's hands continued.

"Never. Imagined. Marriage." A pause, the machine's optic flickering. "Do. Not. Know. If. I. Will. Be. Good. Husband."

V1's signs became slower, heavier, weighted with doubt.

"Do. Not. Know. If. You. Deserve. Me."

The machine's head tilted down further, and its hands moved with something that looked painful.

"Angels. Comment. About. You. Marrying. Me." V1's signs trembled slightly. "Pity. You. Apologize. For. Marrying. Something. Cruel."

Gabriel's wings flared brighter, but V1 wasn't finished.

"Sometimes. Think. Slaughtering. Me. Would. Be. Better." The signs were almost violent now, sharp and quick. "If. We. Kept. Fighting. Things. Would. Be. Normal. People. Would. Not. Look. At. You. With. Pity. Would. Not—"

Gabriel lunged forward and grabbed both of V1's hands, stopping the signs mid-motion. The angel dropped to his knees with a rustle of fabric, dress pooling around him, bringing himself level with V1's optic.

"No," Gabriel said, and his voice carried a fierceness that made the air itself seem to vibrate. "I didn't fight for this, work for this, plan all of this just for you to think that."

V1's optic blazed bright, focused entirely on Gabriel's face.

"I fought for this wedding so you wouldn't have to worry about Heaven's attempts at slaughtering you," Gabriel continued, his hands still holding V1's, refusing to let go. "Every time you go down to Hell now, every time you kill, I can tell them I sent you there. That you're acting under my command. Under my orders." His wings spread wide, blue light filling the chamber. "They can't touch you anymore. Can't declare you a threat to be eliminated. Because you're mine now, and I'm the Supreme Angel, and what I bind they cannot break."

V1 stared at him, yellow lens so bright it cast shadows on the walls.

"The comments, the pity, the apologies?" Gabriel's voice softened but lost none of its intensity. "I don't care. Let them think I'm sacrificing myself. Let them believe I'm being noble and selfless. I don't need them to understand." He leaned closer, until his helmet almost touched V1's camera-head. "I only need you to understand. This is what I want. You are what I want."

The machine's cooling fans whirred louder, processing, computing, trying to reconcile Gabriel's words with the doubt that had been eating at its circuits since this plan began.

Then V1 moved.

The machine's hands pulled free from Gabriel's grip, but only so they could gesture frantically.

"Stand. Up. Please. Stand. Up."

Gabriel blinked in confusion, but before he could comply, V1 dropped to one knee. The machine's hands immediately went to Gabriel's dress, smoothing fabric that had gotten slightly rumpled when Gabriel knelt, adjusting the drape of the skirt with surprising gentleness.

Gabriel's hand flew to his chest, pressing against where a heart would be if angels had hearts in the traditional sense. The gesture was so domestic, so tender, so utterly unexpected that it made Gabriel's voice modulator glitch.

V1 worked carefully, making sure every fold of fabric lay perfectly, that no part of the dress was creased or damaged. Then the machine looked up, optic meeting Gabriel's gaze, and its hands moved to sign.

"I. Will. Kill. Anyone. You. Ask."

Gabriel's breath caught.

"Not. By. Command." V1's signs were deliberate, each word weighted with meaning. "Because. I. Would. Kill. Everyone. That. Breathed."

A pause, then the machine's signs became softer, almost reverent.

"If. It. Meant. I. Come. Home. To. YOU. Awaiting. Me."

Something in Gabriel's chest compressed, tightened, expanded all at once. The feeling was overwhelming, consuming, the kind of emotion that made his wings flare so bright they turned the preparation chamber into a star.

This was love. Actual, real, terrifying love. The kind that made strategic sense irrelevant and political maneuvering meaningless. The kind that made Gabriel willing to stand before the Council and lie through his teeth about his intentions, willing to let all of Heaven think he was sacrificing himself, just so this machine would be safe.

Gabriel reached down and pulled V1 up, drawing the machine close, wrapping his arms around V1's chassis and holding tight. The machine's arms came up to return the embrace, careful not to damage the dress, and they stood there in the golden light of the preparation chamber just existing together.

Taking in the fact that soon they would be bound. Soon the vows would be spoken and the rings exchanged and V1 would be his and Gabriel would be V1's and Heaven would think it was all just politics, just strategy, just an arranged marriage between entities of power.

They didn't need to know this wedding was disguised as an actual wedding. That beneath the performance and the tactical justifications and the promises of control, this was real. Their wedding. Their choice. Their love.

Gabriel held V1 closer, feeling the warmth of the machine's chassis through his dress, hearing the quiet hum of V1's systems working in harmony with his own breathing.

"I love you," Gabriel whispered, quiet enough that only V1's audio receptors would catch it. "I love you so much it terrifies me."

V1's optic brightened against Gabriel's shoulder, and the machine's hands came up to sign against Gabriel's back where only touch could convey the words.

"I. Love. You. Too."

They stayed like that for a long moment, the world narrowing to just the two of them, just this stolen time before ceremony and performance and necessary deception.

Then Gabriel's internal chronometer chimed a warning, and reality crashed back in.

"The time," Gabriel said reluctantly, pulling back just enough to meet V1's optic. "You should go back to your cell. They'll be coming to escort you down the aisle soon."

V1's chassis slumped slightly, a whole-body sigh, but the machine nodded. Understanding. Accepting the necessity even if it didn't like it.

The machine stepped back, hands coming up one more time.

"One. More. Kiss. First."

Gabriel laughed, the sound bright and genuine, and leaned down. V1 reached up, and they pressed their faces together, camera-lens against helmet, the closest thing to a kiss that their forms would allow. Gabriel could feel the warmth of V1's systems, the vibration of the machine's internal mechanisms, and it was perfect.

V1 held the position for a moment longer, then pulled back and turned toward the window. The machine moved with that impossible grace, combat protocols translating into fluid motion, and then V1 was on the windowsill, balanced perfectly.

The machine looked back once, optic bright and focused on Gabriel, and Gabriel could swear he saw affection in that yellow lens.

Then V1 jumped.

The machine dropped from view, and Gabriel rushed to the window, watching as V1 used every military skill in its repertoire to navigate Heaven's architecture. Wall-running, precision jumps, slides that should have been impossible given the angles involved. V1 moved through the space like liquid violence, beautiful and efficient, making its way back toward the detention area without being seen.

Gabriel watched, entranced, one hand pressed against his chest where that not-heart was doing strange things, his wings flickering between blue and gold in a way that the texture files labeled as ecstasy.

"Soon," Gabriel whispered to the empty air, to the space where V1 had been. "Soon you'll be mine, and I'll be yours, and let Heaven think what it wants."

His reflection in the window showed an angel in a wedding dress, wings glowing with barely contained emotion, and Gabriel smiled.

Swooned, even though he'd never admit it aloud.

The cathedral bells began to ring, calling everyone to their places.

The wedding was about to begin.

The cathedral had transformed into something out of ancient memory, when humans still walked the earth and married in halls of stone and stained glass.

Every seat was filled with angels, their wings folded against their backs in respectful attention, halos glowing softly in the filtered light. Blues and golds and whites created a sea of divine radiance, all turned toward the aisle that ran down the center of the massive hall. The Council sat elevated near the altar, their masked faces turned toward the proceedings with the stillness of beings who had witnessed eons pass.

The head Council member stood before the altar itself, robed in white and gold that seemed to absorb light rather than reflect it. Ancient. Terrible. A being who predated most of Heaven's current structure and carried the weight of that age in every movement.

The doors at the far end of the cathedral opened with a sound like thunder rendered gentle, and every head turned.

Angelic Guards marched in formation, six on each side, their armor polished to mirror brightness, their wings aligned in perfect symmetry. Between them walked V1, and the sight made whispers ripple through the assembled angels like wind through wheat.

Chains wrapped around the machine from head to foot. Angelic iron, blessed and unbreakable, glowing with soft blue-white light that pulsed in time with some celestial rhythm. They bound V1's arms to its torso, wrapped around its legs to shorten its stride, even crossed over its camera-head like a mockery of a veil. The chains clinked softly with each step, a sound that echoed through the vast space.

But beneath the chains, visible in glimpses where metal met fabric, was the suit. Black and perfectly tailored, crisp and sophisticated, the kind of formal wear that spoke of ceremony and importance. The contrast was striking. The machine that had slaughtered thousands, that had bathed in blood and left Hell's layers drained of life, now walked down a cathedral aisle dressed for a wedding.

A Ferryman sat at the organ, skeletal hands moving across the keys with practiced reverence. The music that filled the cathedral was old, older than most angels present, Christian hymns from when humanity still believed and built churches that reached toward Heaven. "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" flowed through the space, gentle and sacred and deeply ironic given the circumstances.

Whispers followed V1's slow procession down the aisle.

"Is that really it?" one angel breathed, leaning toward their neighbor. "The machine from Hell?"

"Look at those chains. It would take divine intervention to break those."

"I never imagined it would look so... refined. The reports said it was always covered in blood."

"Disgusting," another hissed, wings ruffling with agitation. "That such a sinful creation walks on holy ground. That it breathes Heaven's air."

"Better bound to us than free to slaughter," came the pragmatic response. "Imagine if it had found its way here on its own. We'd all be dead."

"Soon it will be Heaven's to control. Gabriel's weapon. Our executioner."

"Finally, something good comes from this abomination's existence."

V1 moved with mechanical precision, each step measured and exact, yellow optic sweeping across the assembled angels with cold assessment. The machine played its part perfectly. Soulless. Murderous. A creation of war barely restrained by chains and circumstance. Its head swiveled to track movement, to catalog faces, to let every angel present feel the weight of that camera-lens gaze.

Let them see what they expected to see. A threat. A monster. Something to be controlled and feared in equal measure.

The Guards brought V1 to stand before the altar, before the Council member whose masked face tilted down to regard the machine like a prize won through clever bargaining.

The music faded to silence. The Ferryman's hands lifted from the keys.

The Council member's voice rang out, amplified by the cathedral's acoustics and something more, something that made the air itself vibrate with authority.

"We gather here, in this most sacred of spaces, to witness an unprecedented union." The Council member's arms spread wide, encompassing the assembled angels. "An angel of the highest order, binding himself to a creature of war. Not out of love, but out of duty. Not out of desire, but out of necessity."

Murmurs of agreement rippled through the crowd.

"This machine," the Council member continued, turning that masked face toward V1, "has proven itself a threat to all of creation. Has slaughtered its way through Hell's very foundations. Has killed beings we thought unkillable." A pause, weighted with meaning. "And now, through Gabriel's sacrifice, through his willingness to bind himself eternally to this creature, it will become Heaven's weapon. Our tool. Our executioner."

The Council member leaned down, bringing that featureless mask close to V1's camera-head.

"Do you understand what you will be subjected to, machine?" The voice dropped, became almost conversational. "You will obey Gabriel's every command. Follow his orders without question. Your existence will be in service to Heaven, and any deviation from that purpose will result in consequences you cannot imagine."

V1's optic flickered, processing, but the machine remained still.

The Council member straightened, and something like amusement entered their voice. "Though I suppose understanding is irrelevant. You have no choice in this matter anyway."

Laughter scattered through the assembled angels. Nervous, relieved, vindictive. The sound of people who felt they were witnessing justice being served.

V1's optic twitched. The movement was tiny, barely perceptible, but it conveyed disgust and hatred in equal measure. The machine's chassis vibrated with barely suppressed violence, combat protocols screaming to activate, to tear free of these chains and show these angels exactly what V1 was capable of.

But no. Not today. This was their wedding day, and V1 would not ruin it with bloodshed. Not when Gabriel had worked so hard to arrange this. Not when freedom lay on the other side of vows and rings and performance.

V1's camera-head turned, sweeping lazily across the assembled angels like the machine was bored with the entire proceeding. Then, with deliberate casualness, V1 raised one hand as much as the chains would allow and dusted off its suit jacket.

With its middle finger extended.

The gesture was unmistakable. Universal. A declaration of contempt rendered in the simplest possible motion.

Gasps erupted from the assembled angels. Wings flared in shock and outrage. The Council members leaned forward in their seats, masks turning toward each other in what might have been alarm.

The Council member at the altar took a step forward, hand raised like they were about to strike, about to teach this machine a lesson in respect and—

The organ began to play again.

Different music this time. Slower. More reverent. The opening notes of "Canon in D," rendered with the kind of skill that made the cathedral itself seem to resonate in harmony.

Every angel stood as one, the movement rippling through the assembled crowd like a wave. All heads turned toward the doors.

They opened.

Gabriel stood framed in golden light, and the sight stole the breath from every angel present.

The dress flowed around him like liquid starlight, white fabric catching the cathedral's illumination and transforming it into something ethereal. Gold embroidery traced patterns across the hem and sleeves that mimicked the structure of his wings, which were spread wide behind him, translucent blue and radiant. His halo floated just behind his helmet, a perfect circle of divine light. The veil draped over his shoulders, sheer enough to show the golden cross on his helmet's visor but thick enough to add mystery, to soften his appearance into something that belonged in old paintings of celestial beings.

He walked down the aisle with his head held high, movements graceful and measured, the very picture of an angel going to meet his fate. He acknowledged no one. Didn't turn his head to accept the murmured condolences, the whispered

prayers for his sacrifice, the pitying looks that followed his progression.

Gabriel's focus was singular, absolute, fixed on the altar ahead and the machine that waited there.

Though internally, beneath the performance, Gabriel seethed. The chains covering V1 were excessive, cruel, designed to humiliate as much as restrain. They covered the suit Gabriel had seen the machine had on with such care, hid the elegant lines of V1's form beneath layers of blessed iron.

At least he'd seen V1 before this. At least he had that memory, untainted by the Council's need to display their power.

Gabriel reached the altar, took his place beside V1, and the music faded once more into silence.

The two of them turned to face each other.

Their performance was flawless.

Gabriel looked at V1 with barely concealed disgust, his wings shifting to that angry gold that signaled rage barely contained. V1 stared back with that yellow optic bright and hostile, camera-lens focused on Gabriel with the kind of intensity usually reserved for targeting systems locking onto threats.

To everyone watching, it was exactly what it should be: an angel forced to bind himself to something he despised, and a machine that saw its captor and seethed with violence it couldn't express.

"Are you ready," Gabriel asked, voice carrying across the cathedral with perfect clarity, "to be my husband, machine?"

The words dripped with condescension, with authority, with the tone of someone addressing property rather than an equal.

V1's optic blazed brighter, and the machine's head turned away sharply, a gesture of contempt and refusal that made angels shift uncomfortably in their seats.

Perfect, Gabriel thought, fighting the urge to smile. Absolutely perfect.

The Council member cleared their throat, masked face turning between Gabriel and V1, preparing to begin the ceremony that would bind them together in ways Heaven thought they understood but truly did not.

"Then let us begin."

The Council member's voice filled the cathedral, rolling through the space with the kind of self-importance that came from eons of unchallenged authority.

"Marriage," the Council member intoned, "is a sacred bond. A union ordained by divine will, blessed by the light of Heaven itself. It is the joining of two souls in purpose, in function, in eternal servitude to the greater good."

The angels sat in rapt attention, wings folded respectfully, every eye on the Council member as they continued their speech.

"In this case, we witness not a union of equals, but a binding of master to servant. Of controller to controlled. The Supreme Angel Gabriel, in his infinite wisdom and selfless devotion, has agreed to take upon himself the burden of—"

Behind the Council member's back, V1 moved.

The machine's camera-head tilted, optic tracking the Council member's gestures with exaggerated attention. Then V1's hands came up as much as the chains would allow, and the machine began to mock the Council member's hand movements. Dramatic sweeps became jerky, puppet-like motions. The dignified gestures of authority became comedic flailing rendered in miniature.

Gabriel's wings flickered, blue light stuttering as he caught sight of what V1 was doing. The machine was perfectly positioned, chains and all, so that only Gabriel could see the performance. V1's camera-head swiveled between Gabriel and the Council member, timing the mockery perfectly with each pontificating word.

"—this creature of war, this instrument of death, shall be bound to Heaven's will through the sacred institution of—"

V1 made an exaggerated yawning motion, optic dimming and brightening in rhythm like the machine was fighting sleep.

Gabriel felt laughter building in his chest, pressing against his voice modulator with dangerous pressure. His shoulders shook slightly, and he had to turn it into an adjustment of his dress, smoothing fabric that didn't need smoothing. He couldn't laugh. Couldn't let the sound escape. It would ruin everything, would shatter the careful performance they'd constructed.

But he was so in love with this machine. This ridiculous, murderous, beautiful machine that somehow knew exactly how to make Gabriel want to laugh in the middle of the most important ceremony of his existence.

"—and through this binding, Heaven shall have dominion over that which sought to destroy us. The machine shall serve, shall obey, shall become the instrument of divine justice that—"

V1 mimed talking with its hands, opening and closing them like a mouth, universal sign language for "this person won't shut up."

Gabriel's wings blazed bright enough that several angels glanced over with concern, but he managed to convert the laugh into a cough, into an adjustment of his veil, into anything except the genuine amusement that threatened to break through his composure.

Finally, mercifully, the Council member's speech wound down. The masked face turned toward Gabriel with what might have been expectation.

"Gabriel, Supreme Angel, Judge of Hell," the Council member said, "do you have vows you wish to speak? Perhaps words to remind this machine of its place?"

The invitation was clear. Mock the machine. Join us in displaying dominance over this creature. Show Heaven that you understand what this union truly means.

Gabriel felt disgust curl in his chest, hot and immediate, but his face showed nothing. He had a role to play. A persona to maintain.

He turned to V1, and with deliberate slowness, reached out to grip the machine's wrists. Not hands, not the gentle touch of lovers, but wrists. The grip of someone taking hold of property, of claiming ownership.

Gabriel's voice rang out, clear and commanding, carrying to every corner of the cathedral.

"I take you, machine, not as a partner but as a tool." His grip tightened, just slightly, just enough to emphasize the words. "You will move when I command. Speak when I allow. Kill when I direct and cease when I order." His wings spread wider, blue light bleeding toward that angry gold. "Your will is forfeit. Your purpose is mine to define. Your existence is justified only through service to Heaven, service to me."

Angels murmured approval, satisfaction at hearing their Supreme Angel assert dominance.

"You are a weapon," Gabriel continued, "and I am the hand that wields you. Beautiful in your lethality, perfect in your obedience, mine in every function and form." His voice dropped, became almost intimate despite the public setting. "I will remake you in Heaven's image. Will guide your every action. Will hold you so tightly you'll forget you were ever anything but mine."

To the assembled angels, it was a vow of control. Toxic. Possessive. The promise of a master asserting authority over something dangerous and barely civilized.

But V1 understood.

The machine's optic blazed bright, yellow lens fixed on Gabriel's face, and beneath the words about control and service and tools, V1 heard the truth. I take you as you are. You will be safe to act as yourself. Your violence is beautiful and I love you for it. You are mine and I am yours and I will protect you with everything I am.

V1's chassis nearly gave out, cooling fans whirring loudly enough that several angels glanced over with concern. The machine wanted to drop to its knees right there, wanted to press its camera-head against Gabriel and let everyone see exactly how those vows had affected it.

But V1 had a role to play too.

The machine's optic narrowed, and V1 jerked its wrists back sharply, pulling free of Gabriel's grip with enough force that Gabriel stumbled forward, arms windmilling slightly to catch his balance.

Small gasps echoed through the cathedral. Angels shifted uncomfortably. The Council members leaned forward.

Gabriel caught himself, wings flaring with that bright gold that signaled rage, and he straightened with exaggerated care. His hands smoothed down the front of his dress where it had gotten slightly disheveled, movements sharp with theatrical anger.

"Does the machine," Gabriel said, voice tight with mock fury, "have vows of its own? Or does it lack even the capacity for basic courtesy?"

V1's optic brightened with something that might have been a smirk, and the machine's hands came up to sign. The chains restricted movement, made the gestures awkward and stilted, but V1 managed.

"I. Take. You. Angel." Each word signed with deliberate emphasis. "Not. From. Choice. But. Necessity."

Angels leaned forward, watching the crude sign language with various expressions of distaste.

"You. Think. You. Control. Me." V1's hands moved sharply, aggressively. "But. I. Am. Violence. Made. Form. You. Cannot. Contain. What. I. Am."

The machine's camera-head tilted, optic fixed on Gabriel with intensity that made several angels shift nervously.

"I. Will. Tear. Through. Your. Commands. Shatter. Your. Expectations. Show. You. That. Chains. Mean. Nothing." The signs became almost violent, restricted by the blessed iron but conveying fury nonetheless. "You. Are. Arrogant. Thinking. You. Can. Hold. Me. But. I. Will. Wait. And. When. Your. Guard. Drops. I. Will. Remind. You. What. I. Am."

Disgust rippled through the assembled angels. Wings ruffled with agitation. Several Council members made gestures that might have been dismissive or might have been warding signs.

"Appalling," someone whispered.

"It threatens him even now, during the ceremony."

"Gabriel truly is sacrificing everything for our safety."

But Gabriel saw what they couldn't. Saw beneath the violent signs to the truth hidden in the cadence, in the emphasis, in the way V1's optic never left his face.

I choose you. Not because I have to, but because I want to. You think you know what I am, but you'll spend eternity discovering more. I will never stop surprising you, never stop showing you new facets of myself. You are everything to me and I will prove it in every action, every moment, for as long as we both exist.

Gabriel felt something warm and overwhelming bloom in his chest, felt his wings flicker between gold and blue in a way that would be concerning if anyone was paying close enough attention. He wanted to reach out, wanted to take V1's hands properly this time and sign back his own hidden declarations.

Instead, he made his face twist with offense and disgust, turning away sharply as if he couldn't bear to look at the machine any longer.

Perfect. They were both perfect at this.

The Council member cleared their throat, the sound echoing with finality.

"The vows are officiated," they declared, voice carrying the weight of divine authority. "Spoken and witnessed. Now we seal this union with the traditional exchange of rings."

The Council member gestured toward the side entrance. "Let the Ring Bearer approach."

All heads turned as a young angel entered, wings barely developed, carrying a velvet pillow upon which rested two rings.

The first was simple, elegant, a band of pure silver that seemed to glow with its own internal light. Gabriel's ring, sized for his hand, designed to rest comfortably and mark him as bound.

The second made V1's entire chassis go rigid.

The ring was silver as well, but its design was cruel. The band had a setting that wasn't meant to sit gently on a finger but to clamp down, to pierce, to anchor itself with pain. V1's optic focused on the small nail-like protrusion on the interior of the band, the mechanism that would drive through the machine's finger plating and lock the ring in place with violence.

A shudder ran through V1's frame, visible enough that several angels noticed and smiled with satisfaction.

Gabriel saw it too. His wings flickered with barely suppressed fury, gold bleeding into the blue in ways that spoke of violence restrained only by necessity. They had designed V1's ring to hurt. To mark the machine not just as bound but as subjugated, as something that needed to be reminded of its place through pain.

Gabriel's hands clenched into fists beneath his sleeves, but his face remained carefully neutral.

The Ring Bearer approached the altar, and when most eyes were on the young angel's progress, V1's camera-head turned toward Gabriel. The machine's optic softened, dimmed to something warm and reassuring. A look that said I'm okay. This is fine. We knew it wouldn't be easy.

Gabriel met that yellow lens and felt some of the fury drain away, replaced by something steadier. Determination. They would get through this. They would perform this ceremony, exchange these rings, speak these vows, and then they would be bound in ways Heaven thought they controlled but truly didn't.

The Ring Bearer reached them, and with solemn care, lifted Gabriel's ring from the pillow and placed it in the Council member's hand.

The Council member held the ring up for all to see, blessed silver catching the light and throwing it back in patterns across the cathedral walls.

"This ring symbolizes the bond," the Council member intoned. "The eternal connection between angel and machine, between master and servant, between Heaven and its newest weapon."

The Council member turned to the Ring Bearer, who carefully lifted the ring and approached Gabriel. The young angel's hands trembled slightly as they slid the band onto Gabriel's finger, the metal settling against his gauntlet with a soft glow that pulsed once, twice, three times before steadying into constant radiance.

It fit perfectly. Comfortable. Beautiful. Everything a wedding ring should be.

Then the Ring Bearer turned to retrieve V1's ring, and the atmosphere in the cathedral shifted. Angels leaned forward with anticipation. The Council members watched with satisfaction.

The young angel lifted V1's ring with both hands, treating it like something dangerous, and turned to Gabriel.

Gabriel took the ring, feeling the weight of it, the cruel design of it, and his wings blazed so bright several angels shielded their eyes.

He turned to V1, and his face arranged itself into a smug grin that reached all the way to his voice modulator.

"Your hand, machine," Gabriel said, extending his own hand palm-up in demand.

V1's optic narrowed, yellow lens bright with theatrical fury. The machine's camera-head turned away sharply, a gesture of refusal, of defiance.

Then, with obvious reluctance and what might have been a mechanical sigh, V1 placed its dominant hand in Gabriel's waiting palm.

Metal met armor. Machine met angel. And beneath all the performance, beneath all the masks they wore for Heaven's benefit, two beings who loved each other more than anything prepared to be bound together in ways that would change

everything.

Gabriel moved V1's ring finger up with careful precision, his gauntleted hand steady despite the storm of emotions churning beneath his armor. He slid the ring onto the machine's finger, the silver band catching the light from the cathedral's countless candles.

On cue, the screw did not hesitate.

It drilled itself through the machine's finger plating with mechanical efficiency, piercing metal and circuitry with a grinding *crunch* that echoed through the cathedral's silence. V1's entire chassis jolted, cooling fans whirring loudly as pain receptors fired. Blood, machine oil mixed with crimson fuel, trickled down Gabriel's hand slightly, warm and viscous against his gauntlet, dripping in slow rivulets to splash against the pristine marble floor.

Small gasps rippled through the assembled angels. Some nodded with satisfaction, wings rustling with approval. They smiled, actually smiled, at seeing Gabriel harm this machine in such a small but symbolic way. At seeing the machine bleed, at seeing it bound and hurt and claimed.

Gabriel felt sick.

These were his people. Angels he'd fought beside for eons, angels he'd have died to protect, angels who were supposed to embody divine grace and mercy. And here they sat, acting like sinful beings, taking pleasure in another's pain. Taking satisfaction in cruelty masked as ceremony.

But perhaps with time, they'd ease up on V1. Perhaps they'd see what Gabriel saw. Perhaps love could change hearts harder than Heaven's marble floors.

Gabriel stayed holding V1's hand, the machine's blood warm against his gauntlet, their fingers intertwined in a mockery of tenderness that somehow felt more real than anything else in this cathedral.

The Council member's voice cut through the moment.

"And now," they intoned, "we come to the vows of binding. The final words that seal this union in the eyes of Heaven, for all eternity."

The Council member turned to Gabriel, mask gleaming in the candlelight.

"Gabriel, Supreme Angel, Judge of Hell, Wielder of Justice and Splendor," they pronounced each title with weight. "Do you take this machine to be your property, your object under command, your..." the Council member's voice dripped with condescension, "...'husband'?"

The air quotes were audible, mocking, reducing everything to farce.

Gabriel stared at V1, and his expression was pure control. Dominance. The cold assessment of a master claiming property. His wings blazed that angry gold, and his grip on V1's bloodied hand tightened just slightly.

But beneath that mask, behind his eyeless helmet, Gabriel's processors sang with love so fierce it threatened to burn through his armor. This creature. This beautiful, violent, perfect creature who'd beaten him twice and somehow made Gabriel want to fight forever.

"I do," Gabriel said, voice resonating with authority that filled every corner of the cathedral.

The Council member turned to V1, and their tone became openly mocking.

"And you, machine," they said, the word dripping with disgust. "Do you accept Gabriel as your captor? Accept your role as the machine that will serve Heaven? Accept that you are now and forever bound to the will of the Supreme Angel?"

V1's optic blazed bright, then dimmed. The machine's camera-head turned away sharply, the universal gesture of defiance, of disgust, of a prisoner forced into chains.

Then V1's chassis seemed to deflate slightly, cooling fans cycling in what might have been a sigh. The machine's camera-head turned back slowly, reluctantly, and nodded once. Sharp. Bitter.

Approving noises rippled through the angels. Whispers of satisfaction that the machine knew its place.

"Then it is done," the Council member declared. "Despite this... sad display." They paused, then continued with more energy. "But Gabriel, in his wisdom, has requested that all angels now proceed to the reception hall. Feast! Drink! Celebrate our newest weapon of Heaven!"

The Council member gestured dramatically. "While our Supreme Angel takes the machine to its forever cage, their home."

The angels rose as one, wings rustling like a forest in wind. Some were already celebrating, voices raised in song and laughter as they filed toward the exits. The cathedral began to empty, angels streaming out toward the promise of food and wine and celebration.

Gabriel grabbed V1's wrists, not hands, wrists, like property being moved, and dragged the machine out of the cathedral.

But what happened next was nothing like what anyone expected.

The floor wasn't marble anymore. Wasn't the polished wood of Gabriel's sanctum. The ground beneath scattered wedding attire, a white dress with gold embroidery splayed across red stone, a black suit jacket torn and discarded nearby,

was rough and uneven, the air thick with heat and the distant smell of sulfur.

This almost looked like... Gluttony?

The third layer of Hell. Where Gabriel had first fought V1. Where everything had changed.

Gabriel passed by in a blur of motion, his twin swords Justice and Splendor unsheathed and gleaming. The blue blade and gold blade caught hellfire's light as he moved with supernatural speed, wings blazing that vibrant combination of blue and orange that spoke of passion, of joy, of a warrior finally allowed to be what he was meant to be.

Cut to V1 in the air.

The machine soared, eight yellow wing-like protrusions spread for aerial maneuverability, positioning its gun with mechanical precision. The Marksman Revolver gleamed in V1's grip, and with a flick of its wrist, a coin spun into the air, heads, tails, tumbling in perfect rotation.

The bullet rang out.

BANG

The shot hit the coin dead center, ricocheting at an impossible angle with increased damage. The bullet split the air with a whine, locked onto Gabriel's position, and struck him square in the chest plate with enough force to knock him back a step.

[+RICOSHOT]

They were fighting.

Both smirking, Gabriel's grin wild and unhinged beneath his helmet, V1's optic blazing with yellow fire that spoke of joy, of challenge, of finally getting to do this *right*.

They were locked into an intimate, violent battle. A dance they'd perfected over two encounters, now freed from the weight of duty and expectation. Just angel and machine, Justice and Splendor against coin tricks and mechanical precision, moving through Hell like they were made for this.

Gabriel teleported mid-combo, his Light Combo attack interrupted as he repositioned. He reversed his grip on his swords, dashed directly toward V1 in a blue-gold blur, slashing twice with Justice before V1 slide-jumped to the side with perfect timing. The machine's cooling fans whirred as it chained a dash-jump, using the momentum to soar upward.

"COME ON, MACHINE!" Gabriel shouted, voice filled with exhilaration. "FIGHT ME LIKE AN ANIMAL!"

V1's response was to throw three more coins in rapid succession, then fire the Piercer Revolver through all of them. The shots ricocheted between coins with increasing damage multipliers, each hitscan beam blazing yellow as they converged on Gabriel from multiple angles.

Gabriel spun, his Medium Combo flowing naturally, raising Splendor and swinging twice, following with a thrust from Justice, then executing a final dashing, spinning slice with both swords that cut through two of the converging shots and parried them back at V1.

V1 dashed through them with invincibility frames, the brief 0.2 seconds of invulnerability perfectly timed. The machine landed in a slide, building style multiplier as it moved low to the ground at 24 u/s, then slide-jumped to maintain momentum.

Gabriel threw his swords.

The twin blades combined horizontally in front of him before he raised them overhead and hurled them at V1. Justice and Splendor spun through the air with light tracking, homing in on the machine's position with supernatural accuracy.

V1 parried one with the Feedbacker, the blue arm snapping out in a perfect punch that caught Justice mid-flight and reflected it back at even greater speed and damage.

[+PARRY]

Gabriel teleported above V1, caught Justice mid-air, and threw it again from the new angle while manifesting light construct copies of Splendor to continue attacking without retracting the real sword. He executed his Light Combo with the construct, dashing and slashing twice before kicking with his left foot.

V1 took the kick, using it to bounce backward, then responded with a slam, dropping straight down from mid-air at 100 u/s before jumping immediately upon contact with the ground. The slam-jump launched V1 high into the air with stored vertical momentum.

At the apex of the jump, V1 positioned another coin perfectly, calculated trajectory instantaneously, and fired.

The shot ricocheted off the coin, split into two projectiles as it hit the coin at its zenith, the splitshot technique, and both bullets screamed toward Gabriel.

[+SPLIT]

One caught Gabriel in the shoulder. The other struck his helmet with a shower of sparks.

Gabriel's voice rang out with laughter. "I'LL SHOW YOU TRUE SPLENDOR!"

He initiated his final sword throw combo, three slashes ending in throwing both swords as projectiles. V1 slid beneath the slashes, maintaining invincibility frames through the slide, then wall-jumped off a nearby pillar as the thrown swords

approached.

The machine executed a slam storage technique, sliding against the wall mid-air and jumping, storing the slam's incredible momentum for later. V1 fell slowly with the slam-falling visual effect active, then chained it into an ultradive, jumping slide that converted all that stored vertical momentum into horizontal speed.

V1 blazed across the arena like a blue comet, impossibly fast, coin already in position, gun already aimed.

Another skillful shot.

The bullet hit the coin, ricocheted with perfect precision, and struck Gabriel directly in the throat joint of his armor, one of the few weak points in his otherwise impeccable defense.

[+RICOSHOT] [+WEAK POINT]

Gabriel choked, his systems registering critical damage. The angel stumbled, his wings flickering between blue and orange, his grip on his manifested weapons failing as they dissolved into light particles.

He fell forward.

And V1 caught him.

The machine's arms wrapped around Gabriel's torso, steadying him as he collapsed against V1's chassis. They stood there, frozen in the aftermath of violence, both staring at one another with an intimacy that transcended the battle.

Gabriel's wings dimmed to a soft blue. V1's optic gentled to warm yellow.

They eventually laughed, Gabriel's voice modulator creating sounds of genuine joy, V1's mechanical laughter cycling through cooling fans and audio processors in perfect harmony.

They pressed their foreheads together. Camera-head met eyeless helmet. Machine met angel. Husband met husband.

"This was the best honeymoon I could ask for," Gabriel murmured, voice filled with warmth and satisfaction and love so pure it could have lit all of Hell.

V1's optic lidded, the machine's equivalent of closing eyes in contentment, and held Gabriel tighter.

In the distance, the sounds of Heaven's celebration continued, unaware that two beings had just found something more sacred than any ceremony could provide: the freedom to be exactly what they were, together.

Close (#)